

Message Text

SECRET

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10

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-05 SAM-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 766

S E C R E T BANGKOK 2586

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, TH, PFOR

SUBJECT: AP COMMENTARY ON U.S. FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND

1. AP WIRE FEB 13 CARRIED FRED C. HOFFMAN BYLINER FROM WASHINGTON DESCRIBING PURPORTED FUTURE US FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND. ARTICLE SAID: 1) ABOUT 85 FIGHTER-BOMBERS WILL BE WITHDRAWN DURING 1975, 2) THE US WILL OCCUPY ONLY TWO AIR BASES, AND 3) AMERICAN ARMED STRENGTH IN THAILAND WILL BE CUT TO 10,000 FROM THE PRESENT 25,000.

2. WE FORESEE ENOUGH PROBLEMS IN DEALING WITH THE NEW THAI GOVERNMENT THAT WILL APPARENTLY BE FORMED BY A DEMOCRAT-LED COALITION, WITHOUT SHOOTING OURSELVES IN THE FOOT THROUGH UNAUTHORIZED SIGNALS FROM WASHINGTON ON FUTURE FORCE LEVELS.

3. THERE ARE MANY PRESSURES ON SENI PRAMOT, WHO IS LIKELY TO BE THE NEXT PRIME MINISTER, FOR US MILITARY WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND. WHILE WE DO NOT EXPECT SENI TO URGE IMMEDIATE OR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL, THE SHARP DRAWDOWNS MENTIONED IN THE STORY WILL WEAKEN WHATEVER STAND SENI MAY BE WILLING TO TAKE AGAINST THOSE WHO ADVOCATE OUR EARLY AND COMPLETE DEPARTURE. ALSO, THE IMPLICATION OF THE LACK OF CONSULTATION WITH THE THAI ON THESE FIGURES WILL NOT HELP US IN ARGUING FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF US GOVERNMENT DESIRES ABOUT OUR TROOP PRESENCE.

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4. WE EXPECT PRESS ATTENTION TO THE AP STORY TO GENERATE QUERIES SEEKING OUR COMMENT AND CONFIRMATION (THIS HAS JUST HAPPENED). WE INTEND TO REPLY: QTE. WE CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR THE FIGURES USED IN THAT NEWS REPORT. DECISIONS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE REGARDING FUTURE US FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND AND CERTAINLY WILL NOT BE MADE BEFORE CONSULTATION AND AGREEMENT WITH THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT. UNQTE.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER GUIDANCE WASHINGTON MAY WISH TO OFFER.

KINTNER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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